

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 01947 181614Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PER-01 OPR-02 SSO-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 ARAE-00 /057 W
-----181625Z 112066 /53

O R 181515Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1121
INFO PANCANAL
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 1947

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, PN, PQ
SUBJECT: REACTION TO CANAL EMPLOYEE ASSURANCE STATEMENT

REF: PANAMA 1910

SUMMARY: REACTION TO GOVERNOR PARFITT'S TUESDAY STATEMENT
ON CANAL EMPLOYEE ASSURANCES HAS BEGUN TO BE OBSERVABLE IN
THE REPUBLIC. BOTH IN THE MEDIA AND PRIVATELY,
IT IS ADVERSE, AND THURSDAY'S NEWSPAPER MAKES IT CLEAR
THAT WE HAVE NOT HEARD THE LAST OF THE SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

1. FIRST MEDIA REACTION TO EMPLOYEE ASSURANCE STATEMENT
APPEARED IN AFTERNOON "REPUBLICA" FOR MARCH 16, WHICH REPRINTED
A RESPONSE BY LABOR MINISTER AND NEGOTIATOR AHUMADA TO A
QUESTION AT LAST WEEK'S MEETING BETWEEN THE PANAMANIAN
TEAM AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (CONEP).
(COPY OF THIS INTERESTING ITEM POUCHED ARA/PAN - BECKER.)
AHUMADA CALLED "LABOR JURISDICTION" IN CONNECTION WITH
CANAL OPERATION A "PROBLEM", AND SAID ITS RESOLUTION
DEPENDDED ENTIRELY ON PRIOR RESOLUTION OF THE QUESTION OF WHAT
SHALL BE THE NATURE OF THE CANAL ENTITY. INTRODUCTION TO THIS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PANAMA 01947 181614Z

STATEMENT SAID AHUMADA'S WORDS HAD SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IN
CONNECTION WITH TUESDAY'S EMPLOYEE ASSURANCE PAPER.

2. THIS RELATIVE MODERATION DISAPPEARED THURSDAY MORNING
MARCH 17, WITH LEAD EDITORIALS IN GOP-GUIDED "CRITICA" AND
"MATUTINO" BOTH BLASTING THE STATEMENT. "CRITICA" DEVOTED ITSELF

TO DETAILED REFUTATION OF FIRST FIVE POINTS OF STATEMENT, ALL RELATING TO U.S. CITIZEN EMPLOYEES. GENERAL THRUST WAS THAT THE "ASSURANCES" GIVEN HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH EMPLOYEE LABOR RIGHTS, BUT AMOUNTED TO PROLONGING THE "ZONIAN" ENCLAVE AT THE EXPENSE OF PANAMA'S JURISDICTION IN HER TERRITORY, USING WORDS LIKE "ABSURD", "IMMORALITY" AND "-?344-589,". EDITORIAL PROMISED TO CONTINUE ANALYSIS OF THIS DOCUMENT FRIDAY.

3. "MATUTINO" OMITTED THE POINT-BY-POINT REFUTATION, BUT SIMPLY BLASTED THE ENTIRE STATEMENT IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED: "INDISCRETION, BREACH OF TRUST OR IGNORANCE". IT CALLED GOV. PARFITT'S STATEMENT "...AN INEXCUSABLE BREACH OF TRUST, SINCE IF THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS INCLUDE THOSE YEARNING ZONIANS IN THEIR POSITIONS, PARFITT NEVER SHOULD HAVE MADE THEM PUBLIC. AND THAT ATTITUDE COULD ALSO BE DUE TO EXTREME IGNORANCE, LAMENTABLE BUT DESTRUCTIVE, SINCE IF THE ZONIANS CONTRACT THE IGNORANCE OF THE EXPOUNDER, THEY MAY FEEL PROTECTED BY THESE 'ASSURANCES'".

4. FULL TEXT OF BOTH EDITORIALS TO BE FILED BY FBIS/PANAMA.

5. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBER CARLOS LOPEZ-GUEVARA RECALLED BOYD STATEMENT TO U.S. NEGOTIATORS IN DECEMBER THAT IF A UNILATERAL U.S. STATEMENT WENT BEYOND "LABOR RIGHTS", PANAMA WOULD HAVE TO ISSUE ITS OWN STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT, BY PANAMA'S DEFINITION, THE BULK OF THE ASSURANCES STATEMENT DEALT WITH MATTERS OTHER THAN 'LABOR RIGHTS'. ON MATTERS OF THE LATTER SORT, HE SAID, ONLY A JOINT AGREED STATEMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN APPROPRIATE, AND RE REGRETTED THAT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PANAMA 01947 181614Z

TWO NEGOTIATING TEAMS COULD NOT HAVE CONTINUED TO THIS END AFTER THE DECEMBER ROUND.

6. ANOTHER SOURCE REPORTED AHUMADA SURPRISED AND WOUTE UPSET BY THE ASSURANCES STATEMENT, SINCE IT DEALT WITH MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION BUT NOT AGREED. AHUMADA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THESE ASSURANCES HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH LABOR MATTERS PER SE; THE LATTER HAD NOT YET BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT AT SOME STAGE WOULD BE.

7. ANOTHER SOURCE TOLD AMBASSADOR ON MARCH 16 THAT TORRIJOS HAD ALSO BEEN SURPRISED BY THE STATEMENT, AND WAS UPSET AT ITS PUBLICATION.

8. COMMENT: REACTION IN THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT TO PUBLICATION OF THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN ADVERSE. TODAY'S EDITORIALS ARE AN INSPIRED CONSEQUENCE OF THIS OFFICIAL UNHAPPINESS.

JORDEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, CANALS, EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, LABOR RELATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PANAMA01947
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770093-0676
Format: TEL
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197703108/aaaafsv.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 011728ad-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PANAMA 1910
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2957049
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 970828
Subject: REACTION TO CANAL EMPLOYEE ASSURANCE STATEMENT
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, PN, PQ
To: STATE INFO CINCSO MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/011728ad-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009